A True ACCOUNT of the

Behaviour and Confession

Of the Nine Criminals that were Executed at

TYBURN,

On *Friday* the 31st of *May* 1689. whose Names are as follow, viz.

Charles Hughes, Jacob Turner, William Bird, Charles Lee, Edward Sibley, William Miller, Richard Ballen, Thomas Watkins, James Felton.

ON the Lord's Day the *Ordinary* read Prayers, and preacht twice to the condemned Prisoners. In the Forenoon the Text was the 8th *Verse* of the 5th *Chapter* of St. *Matthew*'s Gospel, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* There is no Principle more fixt in a reasonable Creature, than a restless desire after Happiness. Yet Men mistake in nothing more, than in a fond persuit of such false measures and means to reach not true substantial Blessedness. Therefore, to undeceive miserable Pretenders to Happiness, while they wander in a painful Labyrinth of unsuccessful means to attain it, our Saviour in these eight Beatitudes directs to such proper and genuin dispositions, as will certainly tend to, and initiate the Soul in real Felicity. Heart-purity is a Frame not only blessed at present, but leads to future Happiness, in the perfect knowledge of God in Heaven, joined with an exact Assimilation to him, and a delightful enjoyment of him to all Eternity.

The parts of the Text were explicated, and Evangelical Heart-purity stated as the Spring of all sincere Obedience. Real Heart-purity is an universal Conformity of all the Souls Faculties and Affections to all the Precepts of Divine Revelation, the cross to carnal Reason, or the Self-Interest. It forms clear and honourable Conceptions of God, suitable to his Divine Excellencies, so as to be transformed into their Divine Effects. Heart-purity strikes at the Root of all Self-seeking, which confines the Noble Soul to particular low sordid Times. It will enter into us as the Refiner's Fire. It will become every way absolute. It will not suffer any Corrival with God, either in point of commanding our Obedience, or courting of our Love. It strikes at all Speculative retired Spiritual filthiness in the Heart. But a mixture of Carnality, where Hypocrisie predominates, renders all the parts of Spiritual Religion unacceptable, casts them off as grievous. Contrarywise, the power of Godliness will make a Man live up to the heighth and dignity of his renewed Nature, and not to act degenerately, below his holy state, as not being enslaved to any Lust or Passion.

An Heart purified by Divine Truth, may assure it self, that it is translated into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. It may view the Plot of its Salvation translated already, in the impression of a Godlike Nature.

Here were mentioned some Arguments, to demonstrate *that the pure in heart are blessed*, also the misery of all prophane persons, in being devoid of the Beauty of Holiness.

After many Motives urged, to all sorts Rules or Directions how to attain and promote Holiness, the *Ordinary* spake thus to the condemned Criminals.

O who would not study to promote Heart purity in the present love and practice of it, that they may be welcomed to the Festivities of heavenly Glory. Why then do we grasp after sordid Vanities, and not take hold of Blessedness by an holy Violence?

Examine therefore, Is there no Change in your Hearts, Thoughts, Words, Actions and Affections? Is there any by mark of Renewing Grace on your Spirits? Try your Title to heavenly Felicity by your watchful, constant, sincere and cheerfull Obedience to the Commands of Christ.

O why are we dead to the love and practice of true Piety, as if Heaven were a Phantastick Dream? Why do we but creep on Sinning, as if Hell had no Fire, or it were all to hiss into Smoke?

O who would not ambitiously aspire to get a Sight of God, who is the Amiablest Mirror of Divine Truth, and the infinite Treasury of all Perfection! If we hope for such a Sight, why should we not endeavour with the greatest love of Holiness, and purity, to be changed into a Transform of most active Zeal to Almighty Purity?

Do why should I use further Arguments to allure unto so sweet and excellent Happiness? Heaven is the mansion of the Great Three: The Lord sets Life and Death this day before you. He that obtains by Faith the Knowledge, not reflection Glory of the Lord, by which Saints or Heavenly men grow on the Mountains. The very Hall of Hell, is to be pleased upon those God would summon of wickedness; but the very Antechamber of Heavenly Happiness, is to be made perfect in Holiness as a lively, lovely Representation of the Deity. Only the pure in heart shall see the Glory of God, in whose presence is fulness of Joy, and at whose Right Hand are Rivers of Pleasures for evermore. Heaven, without any Hint of Glory.

On *Monday* the Ordinary visited the Condemned and inquired what Divine Prayer from the Mouth of the Prince that sends on the Heavenly Embassy and Prayer. They replyed, That they were much weakened from their Sickness, so that they could not do their Duties. To which Reply, That clear and pure Conscience may vanish in a moment of Sin, unless they practice the constant Duty of Conversion.

To this, One more knowing than the rest assented, and desired me that I would expound in the Afternoon the 10th and 11th Verses of the 3d Chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians.

After all the Seven Signs, as inseparable Concomitants of true Repentance, had been treated of, the Condemned said, That they were unable of the Nature of Repentance more clearly and fully than before, yet they desired

On *Tuesday* the *Ordinary* having prayed with the Condemned, ask them One by One, of the Employment they were bred up into, and how they fell into a vicious course of Life?

First *Charles Hughes*, Condemned for Murdering his Wife, who was pusht for the Fond Love of his Comerades, tho they knew that he had been formerly Condemned, as having been a Prisoner herself. *Hughes* told me, that he had very Religious Education. I replied, the greater is your Sin, as being against clearer Light, and for degenerating from the Counsels and Examples of pious Ancestors. I told him, That their Virtues could not save him, unless he now repent that he walkt not in their steps. The *Pharisees* boasted that they had *Abraham* to their Father, but the *Baptist* confuted that proud presumption, by assuring them, *That every Tree which did not bring forth good Fruit, should be hewn down, and cast into the Fire.* He said that he was not brought up to any Employment, which exposed him to many evil Temptations. He could not deny, but that he had been refractory in running from the strict Government of his Father, and thereby justly left to fall into farther Extravagancies. I several times pray'd with him, before he took his Tryal, to compose his Mind, for he was very impatient under his Imprisonment, than which there cannot be a more barbarous Fact. He said he was transported by the most violent words his Wife gave him, but wishes that he had endured all Reproaches patiently, rather than thus to have shortned her Life, and his own; yet he hopes that the merits of Christ's Bloodshed will pacifie God's angry Justice, and make his shameful death a means to bring him to Repentance, and save his Soul.

The Second, *Jacob Turner* of the Parish of St. *Botolphs Bishopsgate*, was Condemned for the Murder of his Wife. He was born in *London*, is about the Age of 44 years, was a Weaver by Trade, which he followed for some long space of time; yet falling into decay, it bred discontents betwixt him and his Wife. He said that he had not any design to kill her, but did it in a sudden violent passion, for which he is very sorrowful; not because he must dye, but because he hath greatly sinned against God, and dishonoured his professing of Religion in which he pretended, but now questions the sincerity of his hearts. He was much dejected at first, but upon a more particular discourse with him, and praying for him, he said he found his heart more softned and relying upon God for his mercy. He was the most knowing Person among the Condemned. He said that Repentance to Salvation abhors every Act of Sin, and flies all Temptations and Occasions leading to it. I askt him, How Faith and Presumption differ. He said, That true Faith doth purifie the Heart, and renew the Conscience; as well as pacifie and becalm it, in the lively hope of God's pardoning Mercy. For, where he remits the guilt of Sin, he mortifies and subdues the love and power of it. So thus the Sin which was most delightful, is rendered most bitter in a penitential abhorring of it. Upon observation of his whole behaviour, I do think that he was an Example of Repentance to the rest of the Criminals.

The Third, *William Bird* of the Parish of *Hadron on the Hill*, was Condemned for Felony and Burglary. He was born in *Holland* of *English* Parents, but would not give any account of his Conversation.

The Fourth, *Charles Lee* was Condemned for Felony upon one *Thomas Lee* in the King's Highway. He said that he was born in *Cheshire*, that he was 19 years of age, that his Employment was to Sell Cloth in the Country as a Pedlar. He came to *London* last Winter, but finding no Employment here, he fell into bad Acquaintance, and such he was Fuddled when he Robbed. I told him that was no Excuse, but an Aggravation, because he added Sin to Sin. He reply'd, that he was sorry for taking any extravagant Course. I askt him what Repentance was? He said, it must be for the least Sin, as an offence against God, rather than for Fear of Hell. That it must be such a Sorrow for Sin, as to hate and forsake it, and to loath himself for it; and that true Faith is joined with a good Conscience. I hope he was penitent.

The fifth, *Edward Sales* of *Stepney* was Condemned for Felony and Burglary. He said that he was a Butcher in *St. Sepulchre's* Parish, that he had travelled formerly into *Barbadoes*, *Jamaica*, and *Virginia*, his Employment lately was in the Victualling House of the Navy. He said that he had received many Preservations from God in his Travels, and did resolve thereupon to walk more circumspectly in the course of his Life. But he broke his Vows to God, and was negligent of Religious Duties, whereupon he committed many Sins, and this Crime, for which he is heartily sorrowful. But he begs of God to give him true Repentance, and Faith in Jesus Christ, that he may obtain the pardon of all his Sins, and that of his Life may be spared, he hopes he shall never sin in such Excess as formerly.

The Sixth, *William Mills* of *Stepney* Condemned for Felony. He said that he was bred up to Husbandry, that he came to *St. Giles's in the Fields* a little before *Christmas* to seek Employment, but meeting not with any agreeable to that he had been used to, he served under a Plaisterer for the space of two Months since. That he is sorry for all his Sins against God, more than for the Sentence of Death past upon him. That it will not be terrible to him, if he may obtain God's pardon, and have a comfortable hope of Eternal Life. He seemed very Penitent.

The rest of the Condemned were not willing to give any account of the Conduct of their Life, therefore here I shall conclude my Report of this Session.

Dated the 30th of *May* 1689. *Samuel Smith* Ordinary

On *Friday* Morning about Ten a Clock, the Nine Prisoners Condemned were put into three Carts, and Conveyed to the Execution.

But by the way take Notice of this Remark:

On *Thursday* Night about the Hour of One, these Nine and Capt. *Wellington* (who was Condemned for Murther) being in the Condemned Hole, a Design or Attempt to break the Gaol was offered to be put upon them, unto which the Capt. and Jack Turner would not consent, upon which the rather Eight found their Hand and Feet, threatning them with Death if they cryed out, after which the other Eight fell to Work upon the Boards, raising up about the number of three, and finding down, and a Hole beneath, by the help of a Rope fastned to a Ring near the Bottom of the Prisoners Habitation. After they were very much discouraged Holeth you de Father attempted and desired to keep the Common Shoar of it, fearing to break out near the Passage to the Gate way, singing of Psalms all the while they were at work, pleasing themselves with the Conceit of being upon their Journeys towards God, as they were Condemned, but the Gaol Master the Searcher of all Hearts found them out. Then the Prisoners on the Common side hearing a Noise awaken'd the Keepers in the Lodge, and the Major being call'd for, that a Rabble was about to Rescue, Charged with Pistols, which did put Execution, only Single-sheet, and in short made them yield, &c.

When they were all in the Cart, the Ordinary exhorted them all to true Repentance for all their Sins, and prayed with them, &c. being a Psalm, &c. after which he asked them to confess to the People the occasion of their coming thither. At which they seemed to give a kind of a general Slight answer. Those of them most concerned, were *Thomas Wastal*, *Jordan Bird*, and *Richard Sales*. The other were little concern'd, especially *Charles Lee* who was Condemn'd for Robbing on the High-way. As soon as he came into the Cart, he seemed to be very frolicksome, and took with a very angry Countenance, taking a handful of Money out of his Pocket, threw it out of the Cart amongst the Spectators, saying *Gentlemen here's your Country Justice's Reward*. Then he encouraged himself further, saying, *I have followed the Road these Seven Years and more, and have got Money enough to maintain me as long as I live. The last King had a Coat of my Cutting, &c.* And further, *That I was a Gentleman Born, but never Robbed for my Meat in my Life.* Upon his coming off, he gave two extraordinary Jerques with his Legs, which was much admired by all the Spectators.

Licens'd *May* 31. J. Fraser.

Advertisement.

These are to Give Notice to all Persons, for the Benefit of the Publick, That Mr. Elmy Operator, of known Ingenuity, and above 25 Years Practice, Lives at the Blue Ball in Whale-Bone-Court, at the Lower End of Bartholomew lane by the Royal Exchange, who most safely and expeditiously Cures Deafness and Noise in the Ears in any of what Age soever, (if Curable) and at first Sight, by Inspection, Resolves the Patient if so or not, a most Eminent Person of Quality in this City was Lately. He hath likewise a most excellent Gargarism or Mouth-water, which Cures any Canker, Ulcer, or Scurvy in the Mouth, Fastning loose Teeth, and making Black ones as white as Ivory.

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